



# News Release

Date: February 12, 2014

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## **USCGC Valiant Returns from Migrant, Counter-Narcotics Patrol**

*After 41-day patrol, Coast Guard Cutter VALIANT returns to Mayport.*

JACKSONVILLE— The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Valiant returned home to Naval Station Mayport on Wednesday, February 11, after completing an six-week deployment in the Florida Straits and Eastern Caribbean Sea in support of Operations Southeast Watch and Unified Resolve.

Valiant responded to a surge of illegal migration attempts in the Florida Straits following the U.S. government announcement to normalize relations with Cuba. The cutter humanely processed and cared for 160 Cuban migrants in a one week period.

Valiant also boarded and towed a coastal freighter following its failed attempt to deliver more than 1,000 kilograms of cocaine into Puerto Rico. Valiant's crew members conducted a search of the vessel, took custody of its crew, and towed the freighter over 120 miles to Ponce, Puerto Rico, where it was transferred to Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) and Border Patrol authorities. The freighter's crew was turned over for prosecution in federal court.

During the cutter's logistics stop in San Juan, Puerto Rico, the crew took time to visit two orphanages that care for infants to primary school children. The crew distributed over 200 new toys they brought with them from Mayport and spent two afternoons playing with the children.

Operation Unified Resolve is a dedicated counter-drug (CD) and illicit trafficking operation to deter, detect, and disrupt illicit maritime trafficking destined for Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Under Operation Southeast Watch, the US Coast Guard works alongside interagency and international partners to prevent and respond to illegal maritime migration in the Caribbean Sea and Florida Straits.

Coast Guard Cutter Valiant is a 210-foot Medium Endurance Cutter with a 75-member crew. The ship is homeported at Naval Station Mayport, Florida.

For more information about CGC Valiant, visit <http://www.uscg.mil/lantarea/cgcValiant>